

Cutting Edge Majors

When it comes to college majors, choices like education, pre-med, business, and psychology are oldies but goodies. But if you're looking for something a bit more cutting edge, some of the newest and most popular majors popping up on college campuses are inspired by the latest technologies, emerging industrial trends, new business practices, and consumer demands. Here are a few to check out during your college search:

Biotechnology

Few areas of study have such far-reaching implications as biotechnology, a fast-emerging field that combines engineering, biology, and technology. Careers in the industry lead to medical breakthroughs, development of new drugs, and new agricultural processes. Potential employers include pharmaceutical companies, government agencies, biotechnology firms, chemical manufacturers, and any number of other private or non-profit organizations and companies.

Video Gaming

Yes, you can pursue a college degree in which all those hours in front of your Xbox will finally pay off. Video gaming is a hot industry, and a growing number of schools offer specific degree programs that will prepare you to work in game design, animation, and programming.

Digital Video and Media Production

We live in a digital age, and the constantly evolving field of digital media production and technology is continuing to change the way we get information and interact with media. Many colleges now offer degrees in digital media production, which train you in the latest technology and techniques in filmmaking, television, editing, and animation.

Emerging Media

How do you update a communications degree for the Internet age? Try adding a focus on emerging media from Web sites and blogs to social networks and podcasts. Degree programs look at the technology behind these new communication outlets, train you in developing content for them, and prepare you to use them in business, entrepreneurial, and artistic endeavors.

Health Information Management

There's an unprecedented demand for healthcare in the United States thanks to a growing aging population and increased life expectancies. All those patients create new needs in the areas of collecting and reporting healthcare data. Professionals in the field of health information management develop and administer systems that not only ensure patient privacy and confidentiality, but also help medical professionals in making their diagnoses.

Green Majors

Environmentalism isn't just a hot topic for campaigning politicians it's a global concern that's spawning new ways of doing business and new ways of living. Colleges are responding with majors that prepare students for careers in environmentalism: Environmental engineers develop green energy alternatives and consultants advise on sustainability, green construction, design, and manufacturing techniques.

Forensic Accounting

Looking for an exciting take on a business school standby? Forensic accounting combines investigative skills and legal knowledge with a head for numbers. These professionals analyze business situations from a financial standpoint, and what they find is admissible for use in a court of law. Most forensic accountants hold accounting degrees, but with demand for these professionals growing thanks to increasingly complex business laws and a number of recent high-profile corporate scandals, many colleges now offer specialized training and certification programs. Potential employers include accounting firms, government agencies, insurance companies, and banks, to name a few.

Emergency Administration and Planning

Sadly, recent events have heightened awareness of the need for emergency preparedness. That's led to new degree programs in emergency management, which qualify you to educate communities about potential emergency situations, create preparedness plans, and respond to disasters. Graduates work for government organizations like the Red Cross or FEMA, as well as large corporations and other private organizations.

Forensic Sciences

With the prominence of forensic scientists on a number of hit crime-drama television shows, it's no surprise the field is grabbing the attention of college students. In fact, the major is growing in popularity so much that many colleges are adding or expanding forensic science programs. Think you have what it takes to be a crime scene investigator or crime lab technician? You'll need more than investigative skills these degree programs will ground you in hard core science disciplines like biology and chemistry.